

1. An isolated polypeptide comprising amino acids 1-88 or 111-195 of SEQ ID NO:5.
- 5 2. The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide comprises amino acids 1-88 of SEQ ID NO:5.
3. The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide comprises amino acids 111-195 of SEQ ID NO:5.
- 10 4. The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.
5. The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.
- 15 6. An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 85% identical to SEQ ID NO:5, wherein the polypeptide stimulates NF-kB activity.
7. The polypeptide of claim 6, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.
8. The polypeptide of claim 6, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 98% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.
- 25 9. An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 85% identical to SEQ ID NO:5, wherein the polypeptide binds to caspase-1, CARD-7, CARD-12, or CARD-5.
10. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.

11. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 98% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.

12. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide binds to caspase-1.

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13. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-7.

14. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-12.

10 15. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-5.

16. An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 85% identical to SEQ ID NO:5, wherein the polypeptide induces apoptosis.

15 17. The polypeptide of claim 12, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.

18. The polypeptide of claim 12, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 98% identical to SEQ ID NO:5.

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19. An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to amino acids 111-195 of SEQ ID NO:5, wherein the polypeptide binds to caspase-1, CARD-7, CARD-12, or CARD-5.

25 20. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 95% identical to amino acids 111-195 of SEQ ID NO:5.

21. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the amino acid sequence is at least 98% identical to amino acids 111-195 of SEQ ID NO:5.

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22. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the polypeptide binds to caspase-1.

23. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-7.

24. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-12.

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25. The polypeptide of claim 19, wherein the polypeptide binds to CARD-5.

26. An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence encoded by the cDNA insert of the plasmid EpHC5 deposited with the ATCC as Accession Number
10 PTA-213.

27. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 2 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

15 28. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 3 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

29. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 4 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

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30. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 6 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

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31. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 9 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

32. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 16 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

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33. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 19 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.

34. A fusion protein comprising the polypeptide of claim 26 linked by a peptide bond to a heterologous polypeptide.